



Cyril Mango at the reception ceremony for *AETOΣ* in 1998. Photo courtesy of Anne McCabe.

Cyril Alexander Mango

1928–2021

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At the risk of repeating what has been written elsewhere,¹ we offer here yet another tribute to an extraordinary scholar and teacher.

Adorning the library at Dumbarton Oaks is a pair of life-sized copies in watercolor of images from the mosaics of the Great Palace of the Byzantine emperors. One depicts a young child in a tunic holding an olive branch, the other a leafy tree. They are dated August 1944 through February 1945 and signed with a flourish, “Cyril A. Mango.” It was a turbulent moment during World War II, the time of the Dumbarton Oaks Conversations, and Mango, tracing and coloring the mosaics tessera-by-tessera in Istanbul, was then 16 years old. The images are emblematic of Cyril Mango’s lifelong focus on Byzantium’s monuments and of his ability to record and depict them elegantly, precisely, and with deep and affectionate understanding. His death at age 92, on 8 February 2021, has left the field of Byzantine studies bereft of one of its giants.

Another painting, hidden from the gaze of all but closest friends, was produced by Cyril Mango together

with his wife, Marlia, and hung for years in their dining room in Brill (Fig. 1). It is a satirical-allegorical depiction, captioned in Byzantine Greek, of life at Dumbarton Oaks in the late 1960s. Under the aegis of a voluptuous Spirit of Mediterranean Culture, denizens of the place disport themselves to the strains of a musical trio, the paradisiac gardens in the background counterbalanced by an insatiable Hades below. Mango depicts himself as a drudge peering myopically at a scroll while shuffling behind Ihor Ševčenko, who, clad as a philosopher in toga and sandals, lifts high a tottering pile of books. Meanwhile, Marlia, in a short green dress, balances on a low rung of the “Worldly Ladder” supporting a pushy crowd clambering above her to reach for the golden largesse being showered by Dumbarton Oaks foundress Mildred Bliss. She, in turn, floats aloft on a cloud, as does long-time director of Dumbarton Oaks Jack Thacher, who, garbed in mauve drapery, flourishes a long cigarette-holder and puffs out a black demon. Meanwhile a militant “Spirit of Culture (*Paideia*)” decapitates the “Spirit of Teaching (*Didaskalia*)” with a sword while the “Demon of Yawning” loiters sleepily nearby.

Arriving at the Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection barely a decade after its creation, Cyril Mango found something that existed in few places at the time, namely, a community of illustrious cosmopolitan fellows and visitors all focused on Byzantine studies, a superb library, and a supportive environment with few restrictions—not to mention

1 B. Pitarakis for the Istanbul Research Center: <https://blog.iae.org.tr/en/genel-en/cyril-a-mango-an-englishman-in-istanbul-2>; M. Georgopoulou for the American School of Classical Studies at Athens: <https://www.ascsa.edu.gr/news/newsDetails/obituary-for-cyril-mango>; W. Saunders for the *Guardian*: <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2021/mar/23/cyril-mango-obituary>; B. Ward-Perkins for the *Telegraph*: <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/obituaries/2021/02/22/cyril-mango-revered-authority-byzantine-empire-obituary/>.



Fig. 1. Cyril and Marlia Mango, satirical-allegorical painting of Dumbarton Oaks, late 1960s. Photo courtesy of Marlia Mango.

the swimming pool. He stayed for nearly twenty years. The list of positions he held reads like a *kletorologion*, from junior fellow 1951–53 to fellow 1953–54, research associate 1954–55, instructor in Byzantine archaeology 1955–58, lecturer in Byzantine archaeology 1958–62, assistant professor of Byzantine archaeology 1962–63, member of the Board of Scholars of Byzantine Studies 1967–72, professor of Byzantine archaeology and director of fieldwork in 1968, and member of the research staff 1972–73. Mrs. Bliss, who in those early days still presided over afternoon tea, could certainly feel that she had gotten her money's worth. On behalf of Dumbarton Oaks, Mango made spectacular discoveries one after the other, published them in this journal, edited Greek texts, organized conferences, assembled sourcebooks, worked on restoration, excavation, and survey projects, and helped shape the character and august reputation of the institution.

Cyril Mango was laconic and reserved, and almost never spoke about himself. But in the preface to his *Studies on Constantinople*, for once he was more forthcoming: “My lifelong preoccupation with Byzantine Constantinople is not unconnected with the fact that I grew up in that city and was captivated at an early age by its mystery.”² Late in life, he and his two brothers each reminisced, in interviews or private memoirs, about their early years.³ If their recollections sound like the stuff of a novel, it is worth noting that the Mango household of the previous generation had provided the inspiration for Maria Iordanidou’s *Loxandra* (Athens, 1963), the classic depiction of Greek society in Constantinople at the turn of the century. The literary dimension is of course enhanced by the fact that it was a paradise lost. Not only did Cyril Mango depart Istanbul after the war’s end in 1945 to live abroad for the rest of his life—though returning frequently to visit—but the city he knew as a boy was irretrievably effaced by social and political change as well as by the destruction of the old urban fabric and surrounding landscapes.

² *Studies on Constantinople* (Ashgate, 1993), ix.

³ David Barchard, “The Brothers Mango,” *Cornucopia* 19 (1999), 18–20; Antony Mango, unpublished family memoir (2007); Andrew Mango, interview with Levantine Heritage Society: <http://www.levantineheritage.com/testi25.htm>; Cyril Mango, interview with Claudia Rapp and Vincenzo Ruggieri (2009); interview with Anna Bonnell-Freidin for Dumbarton Oaks (2009): <https://www.doaks.org/research/library-archives/dumbarton-oaks-archives/historical-records/oral-history-project/cyril-mango-and-marlia-mundell-mango>.

The Mango family was originally from the Greek island of Chios, no doubt of Genoese descent given their Italian surname. Cyril’s great-great-grandfather Capetan Andoni had escaped the massacre immortalized by Delacroix, relocating with his family initially to Syros and thence to Constantinople. Andoni’s son Dimitri ran the Catholic printing press of St. Benoît in Pera. With his first wife, Carolina Calavassi, a Frankish Catholic from Syros, Dimitri had five children. His second marriage was to Roxana Melidi (the Loxandra of the novel); they lived at Balıklı outside the city walls and then moved to Tatavla (Kurtuluş).

Dimitri and Carolina’s eldest son, Anthony Mango, Cyril’s grandfather, started a business importing coal from Cardiff and Newcastle to fueling stations along the shipping routes from Hamburg to Novorossiysk. His companies were called Foscolo, Mango & Co., Mango, Doresa & Co. (based in London), and Mango, Sons & Co. (with an office in Piraeus), and they became prosperous. Anthony converted to Greek Orthodoxy and married Evangeline Margariti, whose family had come from northern Epirus to Istanbul. Together they had five sons; the youngest, Alexander, Cyril’s father, studied law at Trinity College, Cambridge, became a British citizen, and practiced maritime law at the British consular court. Alexander caused the family some consternation by marrying a Russian refugee. Adelaide Damonova had grown up on the shores of the Caspian Sea, where her father worked as an engineer in the oil fields of Baku. Both her parents came from families of grain merchants, her father from Tambov and her mother from Nezhin in the neighboring Ukrainian province of Chernigov. After losing both her parents at a young age, Ada had fled the Bolshevik Revolution alone, traveling by train to Batum and by sea to Constantinople. It was there that she met her husband—their sons suspected that it might have been in one of the Russian nightclubs that were popular at the time with refugees and residents alike. Alexander and Ada had three boys, Antony (b. 1924), Andrew (b. 1926), and Cyril.

The youngest of Alexander and Ada’s three sons, Cyril Mango was born on 14 April 1928, two years before the name of Constantinople was officially changed to Istanbul. His first years were spent at his paternal grandmother’s house in Beyoğlu, on Topçekenler Sokak, across the street from the Greek Literary Society of Constantinople (Ἐν Κωνσταντινουπόλει Ἑλληνικός

Φιλολογικός Σύλλογος), of which his grandfather had been a member. Cyril spoke Greek and English with his father and Russian with his mother, while the common language of his parents was French. The boys had Russian nannies and chattered in Russian among themselves. They were tutored at home by a Tsarist military officer, Alexander Nassonoff (for math and Russian), as well as by Madame Lucienne, a Lebanese lady (for French grammar) and a Greek, Mrs. Photiades (for *Katharevousa*). Though devout, the family went to church only during Easter week, either the Russian church of St. Andrew on Mumhane Caddesi or a Greek one nearby.

Every June the entire household, including retainers and cats, would decamp to the island of Prinkipo, only returning in September. It was idyllic for the young brothers, pelting one another with fruit in the statue-filled garden of the family summer house and making daily trips to the beach in a horse-drawn carriage with their mother, who loved to swim. At the time, the waters of the Marmara Sea were still crystal clear. The bathing establishment, another fashion imported by White Russians, was run by their tutor, Mr. Nassonoff. Cyril would often go for walks with his nanny to cemeteries to sketch tombstones and cypress trees in watercolor. It was on the island that Cyril first became enchanted by the Byzantine past—despite landing in the local police station as a consequence of exploring the ruined monastery of the empress Eirene. There was also the fascinating living Byzantine tradition at the Monastery of St. George, with pilgrims ascending barefoot to the church, where madmen were once chained up to be healed. The history of the island was brought to life, full of mystery, romanticism, and intrigue, by Gustave Schlumberger's *Les îles des princes* (Paris, 1884), the first (and only) Byzantine book encountered by Cyril among the French novels and classical texts of his father's library.

The boys were not sent to boarding school in England as their father had been, but attended the English High School for Boys in Nişantaşı. Finances became curtailed by increasing restrictions on minorities and by the decline in shipping following the Bolshevik takeover and the outbreak of World War II. Cyril began school at the age of twelve; his classmates were British, Jewish, and Maltese. A few years later, while still a schoolboy, he began to explore the city, taking the tram with a friend across the Galata Bridge,

through the old city, and along the ancient walls. At that time Istanbul had not outgrown itself, and the late Ottoman city with its tortuous streets was still substantially intact, not yet rent apart by the great boulevards of the 1950s and 60s or the metastatic development projects of more recent years.

Cyril's interest in antiquity was fostered by the principal of the school, a Scotsman named Iain C. G. Campbell, who had studied medieval history at St Andrews and had come to Istanbul to work on the Great Palace excavations in 1935. Another important influence was Ernest Mamboury, the Swiss scholar who taught at the Galatasaray Lycée while keeping an eye on everything of archaeological interest happening in town, from the Palace to investigations at the Column of Constantine and digging for the installation of sewers. Mamboury recognized Cyril's kindred spirit, later bequeathing him sketch plans and notes made on site and drawings of inscriptions, which offered a model to emulate. There was also the Greek Miltiadis Isaak Nomidis, proprietor of the Librairie de Péra, who was passionate about the topography of the city and had recently produced a plan of the land walls of Constantinople with the Byzantine inscriptions drawn in detail. After finishing high school at age sixteen, and with the war still on, Cyril went to work for the British Council, helping with publications and exhibitions. There he met distinguished expatriates, including Steven Runciman, with whom he continued explorations in the city and farther afield. The paintings of the Great Palace mosaics, made for an exhibition that was never held, date from this period.

Once the war had ended in 1945, encouraged by Iain Campbell, Cyril left Turkey for the first time to study at St Andrews, where he took a degree in Classics in 1949. The subject was taught in a dry, old-fashioned way through prose and verse composition—for example, by having to translate into Greek the lead article of *The Scotsman*—but larger-than-life figures such as H. J. Rose and D'Arcy Wentworth Thompson made an impression. During vacations, Cyril visited his brother Andrew in London, where he made use of the British Library and University of London libraries, which had more Byzantine material than was available at St Andrews. The fruits of these vacations were precocious articles on the *euripos* of the hippodrome, Byzantine brickstamps, and the Byzantine inscriptions of Constantinople, publications which earned him a

scholarship from the French government for a year's study in Paris. Byzantine studies had not yet taken off in Paris, although André Grabar held a seminar and Thomas Whittemore's Bibliothèque byzantine welcomed readers; certainly Mango maintained he was an autodidact and did not learn much from his supervisor, Rodolphe Guilland. His doctoral thesis, submitted in 1953, was on the Chalkē (or Bronze) Gate of the imperial palace, published as *The Brazen House* in 1959.

It was a friend from those Paris days, James Breckenridge, who told Cyril Mango about Dumbarton Oaks and fortuitously encouraged him to apply. At the time, under the direction of Jack Thacher, Bert Friend, and Royall Tyler, scholarly work at the institution was focused on the history of art, acquiring beautiful objects for the collection, and restoring the finest monuments. Some projects were theoretical in nature, such as attempts to recreate the form of the lost Church of the Holy Apostles and the Nea Ekklesia. But there were also more tangible projects in Istanbul inherited by Dumbarton Oaks from Thomas Whittemore's Byzantine Institute, which permitted Mango to return every summer to Turkey and to work with people of practical skills and mindset—the likes of architects Paul Underwood, Robert Van Nice, and Richard Anderson, and the restorer Ernest Hawkins—in contrast to the “men of ideas” in Washington. Fieldwork included restoration of the mosaics of St. Sophia, of the frescoes and mosaics of the monastery of Christ in Chora, of the monastery of the Virgin Pammakaristos, and of the Monastery of Constantine Lips, with publications by Mango in this journal and the Dumbarton Oaks Studies series.

The stimulating atmosphere of Dumbarton Oaks was enriched by fellows and visitors such as Alexander Vasiliev, Georg Ostrogorsky, and André Grabar. It was there that Mango met Ihor Ševčenko, an emigré of Ukrainian origin with a comparable gift for languages and scholarly acumen who became a lifelong friend. It was also at Dumbarton Oaks that Cyril met art historian Marlia Mundell, who was to become his wife, indefatigable travel companion, and partner in many projects from Oxford to Mesopotamia and Syria.

Mango left Dumbarton Oaks in 1963 to take up the Koraës chair at King's College London, succeeding Romilly Jenkins. His inaugural lecture on “Byzantinism and Romantic Hellenism” took up themes treated by Jenkins and humorously contrasted what one might

call the the guiding ideologies of Byzantium and modern Greece, but elicited the ire of some who felt he was questioning the unbroken unity of Hellenism. He did not warm to London, where he had no teaching duties and was bored—he later also recalled that his house in Kensington still had outdoor plumbing. After five years he returned to Dumbarton Oaks, invited back with a letter signed by all the staff.

Returning to the institution in 1968, Mango was appointed professor of Byzantine archaeology and director of fieldwork. This period has been described by Giles Constable as “the golden age of field work at Dumbarton Oaks,”⁴ and encompassed Mango's projects at the monasteries of St. Neophytos and of St. Chrysostom at Koutsovendis in Cyprus, his work in Istanbul, Bithynia, and eastern Thrace for the Corpus of Dated Byzantine Inscriptions, and even a season of excavations at Bargala in Macedonia. From a base at the Dumbarton Oaks apartment in the Cihangir district in Istanbul, Mango traveled throughout Turkey, often in the company of Ševčenko and their friend Nezih Fıratlı, director of the Istanbul Archaeological Museum, from Ainos/Enez in the north to Nisibis/Nusaybin in the south, examining inscriptions, monuments, and landscapes. Inscriptions, combining text and object, were an early love of Mango's—he had published a bibliographical survey of the Byzantine inscriptions of Constantinople at age 22—but Ševčenko proved a top-notch collaborator, helping to climb ladders and walls, take measurements and photographs for the catalogue, and wrest every possible type of information from the stone for their commentaries. Together Mango and Ševčenko made and published thrilling discoveries such as the lost church of St. Polyeuktos, built by Anicia Juliana in the sixth century, identified from two blocks of marble unearthed in construction, beautifully carved in high relief with peacocks and grapevines and fragments of hexameter verses preserved in the Palatine Anthology—a discovery that led to many seasons of excavation carried out by Martin Harrison and sponsored by Dumbarton Oaks with the Istanbul Archaeological Museum. There were other discoveries more humble but no less fascinating, such as the ruined monastery of Megas Agros on the south shore of the Sea of Marmara, the seat of Theophanes Confessor and important in the development of middle-Byzantine

⁴ “Dumbarton Oaks and Byzantine Field Work,” *DOP* 37 (1983): 171–76, at 172.

church architecture; or the illiterately inscribed tombstone of the ninth-century high imperial official Sisinnios, revealed late at night in a vegetable garden on the north shore of the Marmara and photographed under Land Rover headlights, which provided an excellent raking light. Manuscripts, also combining text and archaeological object, were another shared interest, and Mango and Ševčenko jointly organized a colloquium at Dumbarton Oaks on Byzantine Books and Bookmen in 1971, bringing together experts in palaeography, codicology, and manuscript illumination to discuss practicalities from parchment production and price to public and private libraries, palimpsests, florilegia, and repairs. Together they also discovered a new manuscript of the *Book of Ceremonies*, spotting its palimpsest text on a microfilm. But disagreements over the transfer of the Byzantine professorships to Harvard's main campus and over certain museum acquisitions which could jeopardize fieldwork permits meant it soon was time to leave Dumbarton Oaks.

In 1973, Cyril Mango was appointed Bywater and Sotheby Professor of Byzantine and Modern Greek Language and Literature at the University of Oxford, the first Byzantinist to hold that chair. Initially there was a Byzantine Society which met informally, with lectures by Mango, Alan Cameron, Dimitri Obolensky, and Hugh Trevor-Roper attended by members of the wider community and the occasional undergraduate. In 1981 an official University Committee for Byzantine Studies was created, made up of members of the faculties of Modern Languages, Classics, Archaeology, Theology, Oriental Studies, and Modern History. The Committee convened a weekly seminar as well as offering taught master's programs whose curriculum equipped students with general history, art and architecture, historiography and hagiography, auxiliary disciplines (epigraphy, palaeography, sigillography), and special subjects. Seminars were attended by a crowd of eminent scholars working on diverse facets of Byzantine culture—Obolensky, Sebastian Brock, Henry Chadwick, James Howard-Johnston, Jeremy Johns, Robert Thomson, Bryan Ward-Perkins, Kallistos Ware, Nigel Wilson—with students from Greece, Turkey, the Balkans, and the Levant as well as the United Kingdom and United States. Under Mango's leadership Oxford became a pre-eminent center for Byzantine studies and a place where students could receive the training and mentorship that Mango had not benefited from himself.

Perpetually wreathed in clouds of pipe smoke, Mango maintained an imperturbable and Olympian aloofness tempered with irreverent humor. A stern gaze could be admonitory or amused. In teaching he rarely offered criticism or praise, simply setting an example to be followed. Students could not expect to be spoon-fed, but rather to be left alone and challenged with an unspoken "étonne-moi." His lectures, read deliberately and in gravelly tones, had an old-fashioned formality of phrasing; but beneath the polished surface, running throughout, was a strong current of teasing. A lecture entitled "Methodology" held up to the light a series of theoretical frameworks and tossed them into the dustbin one by one. It sounded terribly solemn but was hilarious to anyone who bothered to listen carefully to observations like "Marxism imposed a single method on all fields from archaeology to chicken-breeding. Now that Marxism is dead, scholars still hanker for a single method that will tell them what to do."

For each discipline he conveyed the essential, the big picture: statistics of types of inscriptions which illustrate the demise of the epigraphic habit coinciding with the break in urban life; categories of saints' lives indicating the decline in opportunities for martyrdom after the third century; the continuity of historiography, disguising the existence of a dark age, but also the hundred-year gap; the opacity of most Byzantine texts with respect to contemporary reality (the "distorting mirror" of his Oxford inaugural lecture) as well as the importance of archaeology for filling in the picture. Close readings of texts from beginning to end—a deceptively simple approach—were always placed in the context of manuscript transmission and reception and punctuated with illuminating or entertaining details: a text preserved in a single wine-stained manuscript, a piquant Greek word or phrase, an incident that gives profound insight into everyday life or the author's worldview. In the background there was always the map, the landscape, the archaeological context. The development of Byzantine sigillography was vividly sketched against successive phases of public works in Istanbul, when rebuilding in the wake of fires that destroyed the heart of the old city necessitated the removal of huge quantities of earth, probably including an imperial archive; the earth was dumped by the sea where beachcombers collected lead seals by the thousands on the pebbly shore to be sold by the amateur scholar George Zacos at his shop in the Grand Bazaar.

Cyril Mango had a habit of conjuring people up in a phrase, from St. Ambrose the level-headed civil servant, to Du Cange, who made great contributions without ever going to the East, to Gustave Schlumberger, who resided on the Faubourg Saint-Honoré. It would be imprudent to quote here his one-line annihilations of those who did not live up to his standards, but they remain indelibly engraved in the memory of those who were privy to them. Once he elaborated on the subject for the students at Oxford in a lighthearted talk entitled “Devotees of Byzantium,” in which he classified Byzantinists (living and dead) variously as the pious, aesthetes, romantics, those who considered themselves heirs to the empire, and those for whose career choice there was no reasonable explanation.

Mango’s approach was described by Ihor Ševčenko as “byzantinologie totale,” but we never heard him use this rather pretentious term. Writing in turn about Ševčenko, Mango explained, “Scholarship is not so much the accumulation of ascertainable facts (important as they are) or the use of trendy techniques (more often than not unhelpful) as the application of intelligence and knowledge to making those facts meaningful by establishing connections.”⁵ Not one for grand narratives of political, military, or economic history, he preferred to focus on puzzles of cultural history. A hallmark of his work is the use or rediscovery of obscure or neglected evidence, whether in manuscripts, old editions, “difficult” languages, or early maps. One may think of the *Parastaseis syntomoi chronikai*, the Acts of the 787 Council, the Life of St. Artemios, the Freshfield Album, the diary of John Covel, drawings by Charles Texier, the Fossati papers, excavation notes by Macridy Bey or Mamboury. Monuments from the mosaics in the apse of the katholikon of St. Catherine’s Monastery at Sinai to the church of St. Mary at Vize were interpreted in the light of textual evidence combined with firsthand inspection—a standard method, perhaps, for archaeologists working on Classical Athens, but less so in the field of Byzantine studies, where there is too often a divide between those who work on material culture (“to use the Marxist formulation,” as Mango would say) and those who concern themselves with texts. He put

to shame both those scholars who have ready access to monuments and excavations but neglect written sources or wider contexts and those who are content to rehash well-known texts while neglecting what is on the ground. Often, Mango seemed to take a mischievous delight in pointing out, for example, that “The demons are given a more complete psychological portrait than St. Antony”; or that for Nektarios the Cretan, writing his *Epitomē tēs hierokosmikēs Historias* at Sinai in the seventeenth century, the sultans are the legitimate heirs of the emperors; or that the reliefs of the Golden Gate of Constantinople—the object of unsuccessful attempts at purchase or theft by agents of the Levant Company for the Earl of Arundel—are now nearly entirely lost, unlike the Arundel Marbles, which are safe in the Ashmolean Museum: “Advocates of archaeological correctness, take note!” His intent was to provoke not controversy but better understanding.

Cyril and Marlia often spent a month each year in Paris, where he was invited to lecture at the CNRS and Collège de France by André Guillou and Gilbert Dagron. In 1993 he reciprocated by holding the Society for the Promotion of Byzantine Studies Spring Symposium as a Franco-British collaboration in Oxford. At the opening of the symposium, in the neoclassical Taylorian wing of the Ashmolean Museum, Mango, somberly clad in academic gown, gave a tour-de-force lecture on the water supply of Constantinople. Dagron’s equally erudite lecture on the fish, fishermen, and fisheries of Constantinople was delivered in the University Museum of Natural History, surrounded by thousands of bottled marine specimens.

Visits to Istanbul were frequent, whether for a tour of imperial caliber for Oxford students (in response to a plea to add field trips to the master’s degree programs) or to inspect the excavations of the Theodosian Harbor at Yenikapı, the pottery kilns at Sirkeci, or the parking lot of the Four Seasons hotel, probable site of the Chalkē Gate. The Mangos would stay at the Kalyon Hotel on the site of the Palace of Marina and invite students to join them at the marvelously named old-fashioned fish restaurant Karışma Sen (Don’t You Meddle!) on the Marmara shore.

His career at Dumbarton Oaks may have begun with work on the most central and beautiful ecclesiastical monuments of the Byzantine capital, but “What we need,” Cyril Mango wrote, “is a systematic investigation of Byzantine cities and villages, of castles and farms, of

⁵ “Ihor Ševčenko as Byzantinist,” in *Okeanos: Essays Presented to Ihor Ševčenko on His Sixtieth Birthday by His Colleagues and Students*, ed. C. Mango and O. Pritsak, Harvard Ukrainian Studies VII (1983), 1–3, at 2.

water-works, roads, and industrial installations in different provinces of the Empire.”⁶ The Oxford Mission to al-Andarin, directed by his wife, Marlia, put this into practice, with excavations of a late antique bathhouse in a Syrian town together with a survey of water-collecting, water-storage, and irrigation systems and farms in the surrounding countryside. It cannot have been easy for Mango, in his late 70s, to jolt across the desert in a pickup truck at dawn or spend long days in the heat and dust of the excavations. But he savored discoveries of the bath’s sophisticated hydraulic engineering and luxurious marble decor (contrasting starkly with the team’s spartan living conditions) as well as encounters with familiar post-Ottoman Levantine culture and traditional Bedouin life—although once the appearance of yet another colossal plate of spicy pickled eggplant (a local breakfast specialty) was greeted with “imam bayilmadi” (“the imam did not faint,” a reference to a different eggplant dish called in Turkish imam bayıldı, “the imam fainted”!).

Cyril Mango’s publications, conveniently enumerated in a recent bibliography, speak for themselves;⁷ we have no doubt that readers of *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* are well acquainted with them. They range from editions and translations of Greek texts, primarily sources for the so-called dark age and period of recovery (the *Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor*; the *Short History* of Nikephoros, Patriarch of Constantinople; the correspondence of Ignatios the Deacon; the *Homilies* of Photius) to works of synthesis (“Antique Statuary and the Byzantine Beholder”; *Byzantine Literature as a Distorting Mirror*; “The Legend of Leo the Wise”) with dozens of archaeological puzzles solved along the way (“St. Michael and Attis”; “The Palace of Marina, the Poet Palladas, and the Bath of Leo VI”; “Ancient Spolia in the Great Palace of Constantinople”; “A Memorial to the Emperor Maurice”; “Sépultures et épitaphes aristocratiques à Byzance”). Some catalogue entries from the Corpus of Dated Byzantine Inscriptions were published individually, along with a survey, “Byzantine Epigraphy (4th to 10th Centuries).” Particularly valuable for students are Mango’s distillations of his wide reading and travels into textbooks (*Byzantium: The Empire of*

⁶ *Byzantium: The Empire of the New Rome* (London, 1980), 8.

⁷ I. Bitha, “Δημοσιεύματα του Cyril A. Mango (14 Απρίλιου 1928–8 Φεβρουαρίου 2021),” *Δελτ. Χριστ. Αρχ. Ετ.* 43 (2022): 21–30. Publication details for the following works can be found in this publication.

the New Rome; Byzantine Architecture; The Art of the Byzantine Empire 312–1453: Sources and Documents; the illustrated *Oxford History of Byzantium*). Mango joked about the bulk of the magnificent albums he produced with photographer Ahmet Ertuğ (*Hagia Sophia: A Vision for Empires*; *Chora: The Scroll of Heaven*; *Istanbul: City of Seven Hills*), but their texts may be read with profit by layman and specialist alike.

Although others have followed in his tracks, written at greater length on the same subjects, and even echoed his titles, Mango’s publications stand the test of time not simply because of their substantial contributions but also because of their wit, elegance of style, and avoidance of jargon. In contrast to the purple prose that for centuries has been conventional in writing about Byzantium, Mango was resolutely unsentimental when it came to his subject, asking commonsense questions and providing answers based on solid evidence. Nonetheless it is clear that his work was impelled by a deep fascination and affection, that it was “play for mortal stakes.” If what initially attracted him to Byzantium was its mystery, certainly in the course of his long career he managed to elucidate many of these mysteries and came to understand and explain the Byzantines on their own terms. One might say he felt at home with Byzantium.

There will be two additions to the bibliography. One is the *Corpus of Dated Inscriptions of Constantinople, Bithynia, and Eastern Thrace*, which presents a dated series with illustrations and commentary, and is intended as an aid for the study of undated inscriptions. Begun by Mango and Ševčenko as a Dumbarton Oaks project, it is being brought to completion by their student Anne McCabe under the auspices of the Centre for the Study of Ancient Documents, Oxford. The other is *Late Roman and Medieval Constantinople: A Study of Urban Transformation, A.D. 195–1204*, commissioned for Oxford University Press in the 1980s by J. K. Cordy, which occupied Mango until the end of his life. Rather than taking the topographical approach, standard since the age of Gyllius, the book treats the development of the city chronologically and thematically. Currently in press under Jonathan Bardill’s guidance, it will be (as Ernest Mamboury once described his own excellent guidebook, *Istanbul touristique*), “un ouvrage digne de la grande ville.”

A complete list of Cyril Mango’s academic honors would render this tribute excessively lengthy, but one may note that he was a fellow of the British Academy

and of the Society of Antiquaries, president of the British Society for the Promotion of Byzantine Studies, honorary president of the Association internationale des études byzantines, foreign corresponding member of the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres, and honorary member of the Christian Archaeological Society of Athens. His retirement was marked with a Festschrift entitled *Bosphorus*,⁸ and his 70th birthday commemorated with a volume entitled *AETOΣ*,⁹ a symposium at Dumbarton Oaks on “Constantinople: The Fabric of the City,” and a cake in the shape of Buondelmonti’s Constantinople offered by Oxford students. His 80th birthday was celebrated by a symposium entitled “Byzantine Athens: Monuments, Excavations, Inscriptions” at the Gennadius Library. At the end of his life, even after a stroke, Mango’s memory and acerbic humor remained unimpaired, as did his command of languages. He expressed regret only for the multiplication of bureaucratic impediments to research, the degradation of monuments and landscapes, and the paucity of systematic excavations in Istanbul. We may give the last word to Ihor Ševčenko, who at Harvard seminars would

occasionally ask in a rhetorical manner, “Who is the greatest Byzantinist in the world?” We students thought he meant himself. But he would reply, “Cyril Mango.”

Cyril Mango is survived by his wife, Marlia, and by his daughters, Cecily and Susan, from previous marriages. He is buried in Oxford, the other Bosphorus.

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⁸ S. Efthymiadis, C. Rapp, and D. Tsougarakis, eds., *Bosphorus: Essays in Honour of Cyril Mango* (Amsterdam, 1995).

⁹ I. Ševčenko and I. Hüttner, eds., *AETOΣ: Studies in Honour of Cyril Mango Presented to Him on April 14, 1998* (Stuttgart, 1998).